CHARLTON COMICS
CHARLTON
PREMIERE
12¢
NO. 4 MAY CDC
Presents UNLIKELY TALES
HERE IS A LITTLE TIDBIT FROM MY VAST COLLECTION OF TALES OF FANTASY THAT I'M SURE YOU'LL ENJOY! THE GENTLEMAN IN DISTRESS BELOW IS WILBERT BLAND... "THE INSIGNIFICANT MAN"
HAS ANYONE SEEN WILBERT?
NO! I HAVEN'T!
I DON'T THINK HE CAME IN TODAY, BOSS!
WH...WHAT'S GOING ON? I'M RIGHT HERE! CAN'T YOU SEE ME? GOOD LORD...CAN'T ANYONE SEE ME?
ROCKE

HELLO AGAIN! REMEMBER ME?.... ABOUT THREE MONTHS AGO, I WAS IN ONE OF YOUR MORE DISTURBING DREAMS! THOUGHT YOU GOT RID OF ME ONCE YOU WOKE UP, HUH! WELL, THAT SHOWS YOU HOW MUCH YOU KNOW! OF COURSE, YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOUR ANALYST SAID ABOUT ME, THAT I'M NOTHING BUT A BUNCH OF REPRESSED HOSTILITIES! BUT WHAT YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW IS THAT, BESIDES BEING A GHOULISH-LOOKING APPARITION AND THE PRODUCT OF AN OBVIOUSLY WARPED IMAGINATION, I AM ALSO A MEMBER OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF CHARLTON COMICS (SEE? YUH DIDN'T KNOW THAT, DID YUH?), AND I'M HERE TO TAKE YOU ON A JOURNEY INTO THE WORLD OF THE UNEXPECTED.... AND THE UNEXPLAINED!
SO.... IF YOU'RE TIRED OF ALWAYS READING STORIES THAT MAKE SENSE, THEN COME ALONG AND FOLLOW ME INTO THE MIND BLOWN WORLD OF THE UNLIKELY....
-INGREDIENTS-
"INSIGNIFICANT MAN"
"THE EXPEDITION"
"THE PRESENCE"
"TIME MACHINE"
B-1212
RUCKE-

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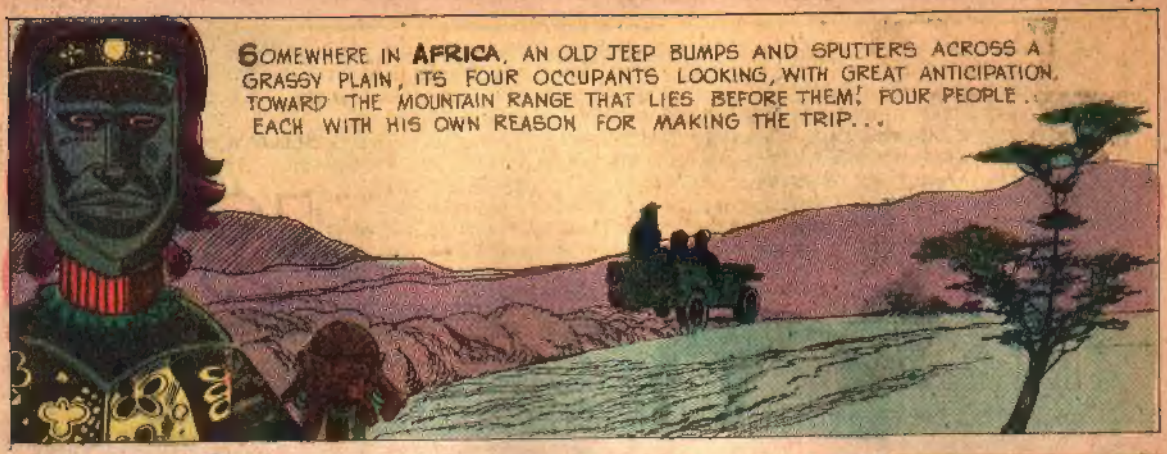
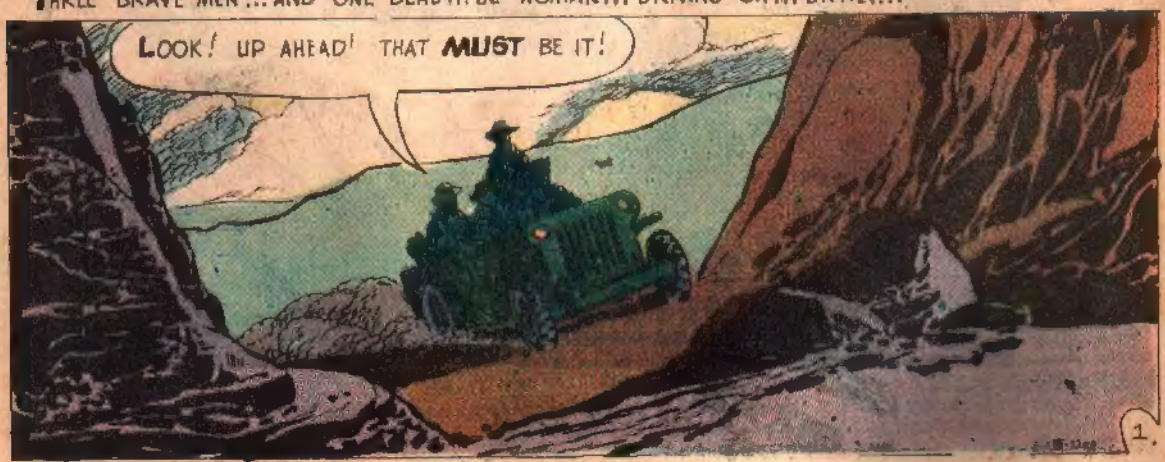
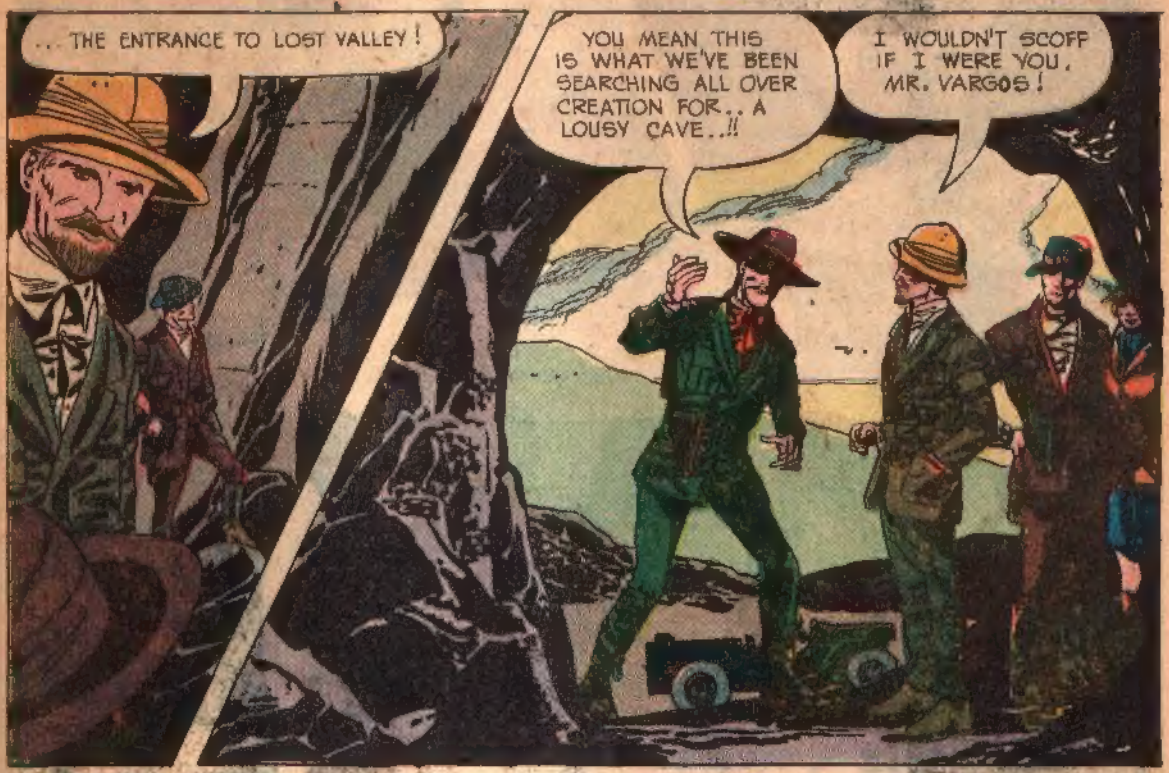
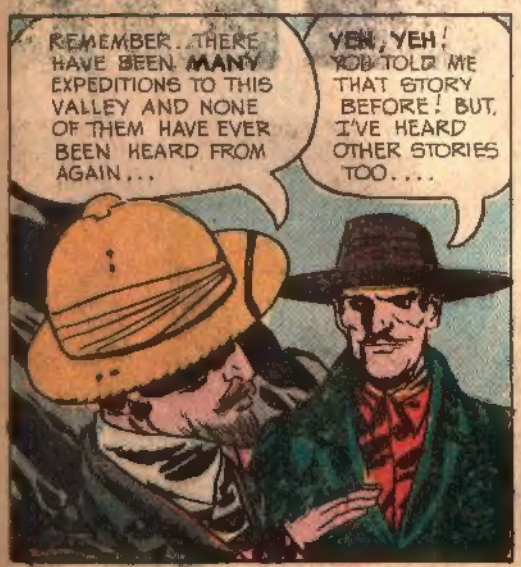

SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA, AN OLD JEEP BUMPS AND SPUTTERS ACROSS A GRASSY PLAIN, ITS FOUR OCCUPANTS LOOKING, WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION, TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN RANGE THAT LIES BEFORE THEM! FOUR PEOPLE .. EACH WITH HIS OWN REASON FOR MAKING THE TRIP...

THREE BRAVE MEN ... AND ONE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN... DRIVING ON ... UNTIL....



ZOWIE, GANG! REMEMBER ALL THOSE OLD MOVIES WHERE SOME SCIENTIST AND HIS FRIENDS WOULD EXPLORE DARKEST AFRICA AND BUMP INTO ALL KINDS OF FANTASTIC CREATURES! WELL, GET SET FOR NOSTALGIA, ACTION AND ADVENTURE AS YOUR OL' BUDDY- BELLA VON DRAK TELLS YOU ABOUT THE.....
EXPEDITION


... THE ENTRANCE TO LOST VALLEY!
YOU MEAN THIS IS WHAT WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING ALL OVER CREATION FOR.. A LOUSY CAVE..!!
I WOULDN'T SCOFF IF I WERE YOU, MR. VARGOS!


REMEMBER.. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY EXPEDITIONS TO THIS VALLEY AND NONE OF THEM HAVE EVER BEEN HEARD FROM AGAIN...
YEH, YEH! YOU TOLD ME THAT STORY BEFORE! BUT, I'VE HEARD OTHER STORIES TOO....

.. LIKE THE ONE ABOUT THE GREAT NATIVE TREASURE THAT'S HIDDEN IN THE VALLEY! THAT'S THE STORY THAT INTERESTS ME!
I'VE TOLD YOU... WE'RE NOT SEARCHING FOR TREASURE! THIS IS A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION!

DON'T KID ME! YOU THREE ARE OUT FOR THE TREASURE JUST AS MUCH AS I AM!
YOU'RE WASTING OUR TIME, MR. VARGAS..WE'RE GOING INTO THE VALLEY NOW... BUT FOR SCIENCE!
NO! WAIT! YOU MUSTN'T GO IN THERE!
!
WH..? WHO ARE YOU?
I'M JIM FOWLEY! I'M A WHITE HUNTER, AND I'M OBLIGATED TO WARN YOU AGAINST ENTERING THAT VALLEY! WHAT THE NATIVES SAY ABOUT THE PLACE IS TRUE!
I'M ABOUT FED UP WITH STORIES-BUT GO AHEAD ...WHAT DO THE NATIVES SAY?
THEY SAY THERE ARE FANTASTIC, GIANT CREATURES IN THERE! BLOOD-THIRSTY BEASTS, THE LIKES OF WHICH YOU HAVE NEVER BEFORE SEEN!
YOU, SIR, ARE THE LEADER OF THIS EXPEDITION...YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME!
I'M SORRY! WE MUST PUSH ON...IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE!
...THEN I WISH YOU GOOD LUCK! BUT, I DOUBT I WILL EVER SEE YOU AGAIN!
WHEW! CHEERFUL FELLA, ISN'T HE?

SILENTLY, THE EXPEDITION TEAM MAKES ITS WAY THROUGH A LONG, DARKENING TUNNEL....
FATHER! UP AHEAD! WHAT IS IT!?
FOG...OR MIST OF SOME SORT! NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT! WE'LL HAVE TO PASS THROUGH IT THOUGH! C'MON! FOLLOW ME!
ON THEY PUSH... EVER ON UNTIL...
HOW MUCH MORE FOG IS THERE? THIS IS GETTING TO BE A DRAG!
LOOK.. UP AHEAD! IT'S GETTING LIGHTER! WE MUST BE REACHING THE END OF THE PASSAGEWAY!
BUT JUST AS EVERYTHING SEEMS ITS BRIGHTEST...
FATHER! SOMETHING'S WRONG! I FEEL WEAK ..STARTING TO SHAKE ALL OVER!
ME TOO! I'M GETTING THE SHAKES! DON'T KNOW WHAT'S COME OVER ME!
YES... I FEEL IT ALSO! I DON'T KNOW ANY REASON WHY WE SHOULD FEEL THIS WAY-UNLESS ...
VARGOS ...HAND ME THE GEIGER COUNTER... QUICK!

GOOD LORD! THIS FOG IS HIGHLY RADIO-ACTIVE! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE-FAST!
IF ANYONE PASSES OUT-CARRY THEM! WE CAN'T LEAVE ANYONE IN THIS DEADLY RADIATION!
CLIKK CLIK
THEN..
AHH.. MADE IT!
THANK HEAVENS!
YOU ALL CHECK OUT ... NO SERIOUS RADIATION EFFECTS!
FATHER! LOOK!
SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE SKY, A MAMMOTH INSECT ZOOMS TOWARD THE FOURSOME...
GOOD LORD! A DRAGON FLY, THE SIZE OF AN AIRPLANE!
GET BACK! INTO THE BUSHES!
5.

EVEN AS OUR HEROES REACH SAFETY... ANOTHER MAMMOTH SHAPE APPEARS...
LOOK! IT'S A GIANT BIRD- ATTACKING THE INSECT!
SOMEHOW THE ANIMALS IN THIS VALLEY HAVE GROWN TO GIANTS! I'VE GOT TO CAPTURE ONE AND TAKE IT BACK TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD!
WE CAN DO IT, DOCTOR!
I TOLD YOU, VARGOS .. THIS IS A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION! YOU STAY WITH THE GROUP AND DO AS I. ORDER!
YES, AND WE CAN ALSO CAPTURE TREASURE! ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS FIND IT!
BUT, THE FORTUNE HUNTER SEEMS NOT TO HEAR THE DOCTOR'S COMMAND AS A SPARKLE CATCHES HIS EYE...
I KNOW I SAW SOMETHING! IT'S HERE SOMEWHERE!
...A GIANT ... SPIDER... AAAAGGGH!
6.

VARGOS FIGHTS FURIOUSLY - BUT THE END IS CERTAIN...
THE SPIDER IS LEAVING ... WITH ITS PREY! AT LEAST WE'RE SAFE!
WE HAVE TO CONTINUE...
ON, THE REMAINING THREE PUSH.. THEN SUDDENLY...
FATHER! LOOK! A BIRD! IT'S HEADING TOWARD US!
LET'S RUN FOR IT!
NOOO! I CAN'T BEAR TO LOOK!
.. THERE'S NOTHING TO SEE! THEY'RE FLYING OUT OF SIGHT!
7.

THERE'S LIGHT AT THE OTHER END OF THIS CAVE! THIS MUST BE ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY OUT OF THE VALLEY!
WELL THEN, C'MON! THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO ESCAPE THIS NIGHTMARE WORLD!

DOWN THROUGH THE NARROW PASSAGEWAY... OVER AND AROUND JAGGED ROCKS... BREATHLESS BUT RACING EVER ON... UNTIL...

SCANNING THE HORIZON, MICHAEL SIGHTS A FAMILIAR FACE...

C'MON! LET'S GET OVER THERE AND TALK TO HIM! I DON'T KNOW IF HE'LL BELIEVE OUR STORY...
NOW THAT IT'S ALL OVER. I'M NOT EVEN SURE I BELIEVE IT! IT WAS ALL SO FANTASTIC I...
M-M MICHAEL! LOOK!
BUT..I DON'T UNDERSTAND! WHAT'S HAPPENING?
DON'T YOU SEE? THOSE ANIMALS WE FOUGHT! THEY MUST HAVE BEEN ORDINARY-SIZED ANIMALS! WE'RE THE ONES WHO HAVE CHANGED! WE'VE SHRUNK!
UH-OH! DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT MR. FOWLEY JUST STEPPED ON SOMETHING! HOW DID IT HAPPEN? WELL, HE JUST PUT HIS FOOT DOWN AND... OH I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN!
... YOU WANNA KNOW HOW OUR HEROES BECAME SO SMALL! .. WELL, PERHAPS IT WAS THAT STRANGE FOG THEY PASSED THROUGH! MAYBE THAT DID SOMETHING TO THEM! OR... WELL, TO TELL THE TRUTH... WHO KNOWS?
THE END

MEN SPEAK OF THAT INTANGIBLE FORCE WHICH WORKS ON THEIR LIVES, THE FORCE WHICH CHANGES DESTINIES OR DISRUPTS HISTORY. SOME CALL IT "FATE", OTHERS BELIEVE THAT THE STARS SHAPE THEIR LIVES. BUT KNOW YOU, MORTALS, THAT NEITHER FATE NOR THE STARS SHAPE YOUR LIVES. FOR I AM THE MENTOR OF MANKIND. I...

THE PRESENCE!

"YOU SEE ME NOT, YOU HEAR ME NOT, FOR MY FORM IS NOT CORPORAL. AND YET, YOU SENSE THE ESSENCE OF MY BEING, AND BY THIS, BY THE MERE ACTUALITY OF MY EXISTENCE, DO I INFLUENCE YOUR LIVES!"

B-1211

DAVID KROLNER'S LIFE HAD BEEN A SMOOTH ONE. HIS FAMILY WAS HAPPY, AND THOUGH NOT WEALTHY, THEY WERE FINANCIALLY SET.

HE WAS AN AMIABLE CHILD...A GOOD STUDENT...

ANOTHER "A", DAVID. NO WONDER YOU'RE ALWAYS SMILING.

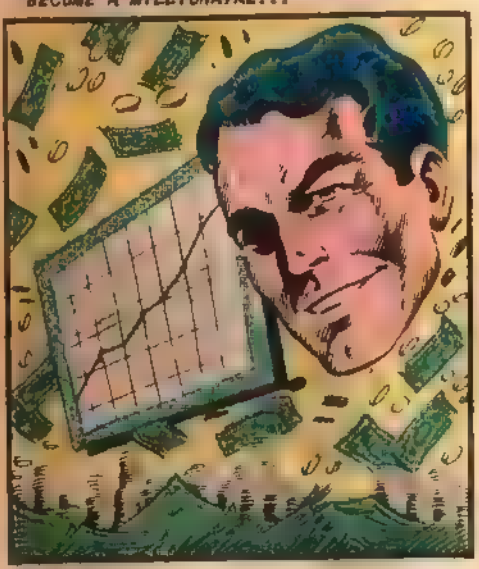
THANK YOU, MISS PETERSON.

AND LATER, WHEN HE SET OUT TO START HIS OWN BUSINESS, HE WAS AN INSTANT SUCCESS!

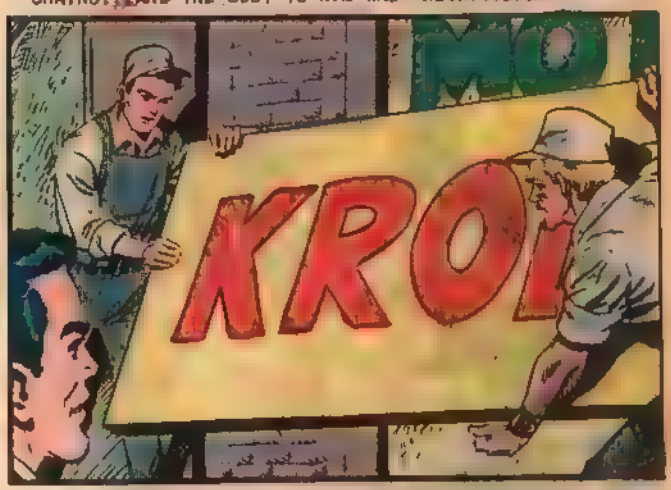
1

DAVID'S BUSINESS WAS A DEPARTMENT STORE, BUT SOON HE OWNED A CHAIN...
THESE ARE MARVELOUS! AND SO AHEAD OF THE SEASON!
SALE
KROL
NO PLACE ELSE IN TOWN HAS THEM YET!
SALE AT
DEPT.
SALE
PHEW! WE SURE SOLD THAT ITEM OUT FAST! MR. KROLNER REALLY KNOWS HOW TO PICK A FAD!

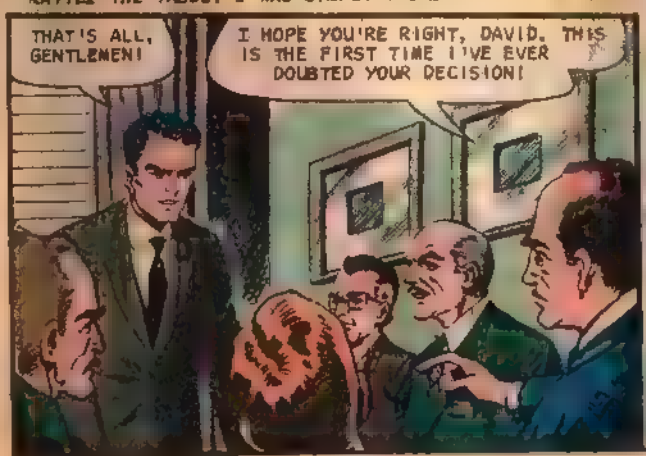
TRULY, DAVID KROLNER HAD AN UNCANNY BUSINESS SENSE, BEFORE LONG HE HAD BECOME A MILLIONAIRE...



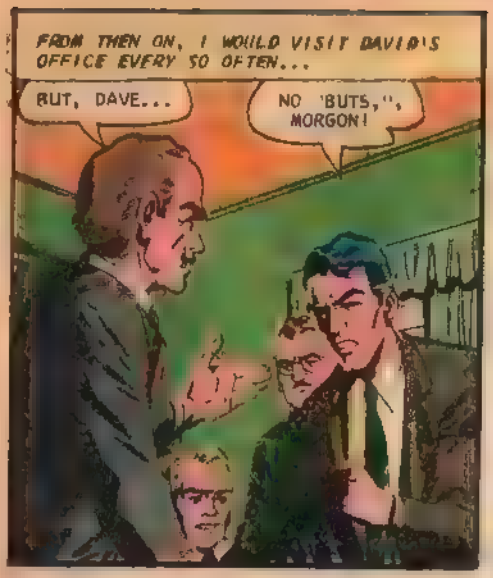
AND ONLY ONE YEAR LATER, HE WAS ABLE TO BUY OUT HIS TWO CLOSEST COMPETITORS...TWO LARGE DEPARTMENT STORE CHAINS...AND THE COST TO HIM WAS "NEGLIGIBLE."



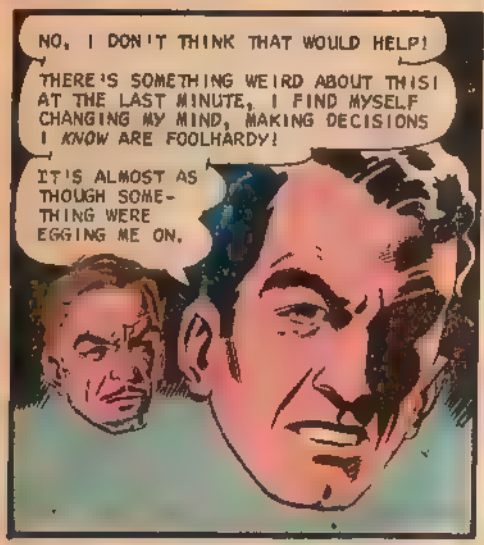
THERE SEEMED NO LIMIT TO THE YOUNG MAN'S POTENTIAL. HE COULD NOT MAKE A MISTAKE. SO I "ATTENDED" HIS NEXT CONFERENCE. I DIDN'T WHISPER TO ANYONE OR RATTLE THE TABLE. I WAS SIMPLY THERE!

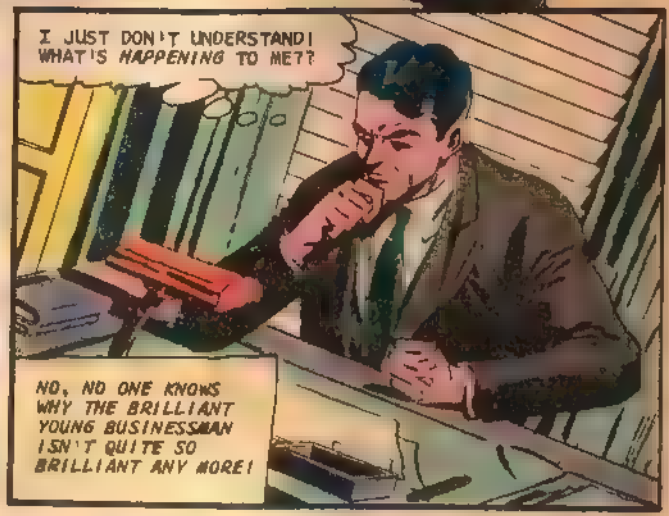


THAT WAS A BAD MISTAKE YOU MADE LAST WEEK, DAVE.
CAN WE TAKE THE LOSSES?
OF COURSE! IT'LL SET US BACK SOME, BUT WE'RE STILL A SOUND COMPANY.



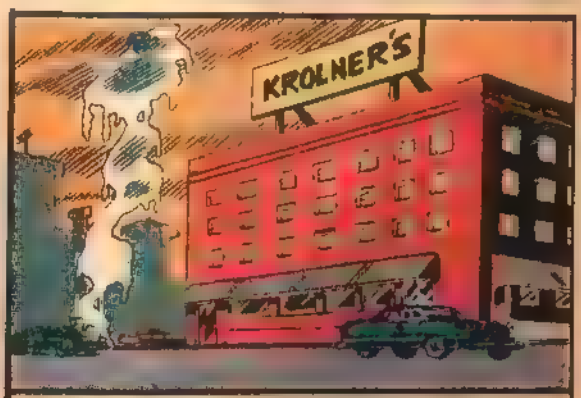
WELL, YOU 'NO BUTTED' US OUT OF ANOTHER FOUR MILLION!
PERHAPS A REST...
I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S COME OVER ME LATELY! I'M SLIPPING...LOSING MY TOUCH!


NO, I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD HELP!
THERE'S SOMETHING WEIRD ABOUT THIS! AT THE LAST MINUTE, I FIND MYSELF CHANGING MY MIND, MAKING DECISIONS I KNOW ARE FOOLHARDY!
IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH SOMETHING WERE EGGING ME ON.


I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME??
NO, NO ONE KNOWS WHY THE BRILLIANT YOUNG BUSINESSMAN ISN'T QUITE SO BRILLIANT ANY MORE!

OF COURSE, HE'S STILL A SUCCESS, BUT NOT THE KIND OF SUCCESS HE USED TO BE!

GOOD LORD! ANOTHER MILLION AND A QUARTER...DOWN THE DRAIN!
TAKE IT EASY, DAVE! WE'RE STILL DOUBLE THE WORTH OF OUR CLOSEST COMPETITOR!
YEAH...I HOPE WE CAN STAY THAT WAY!



SO NOW, EVERY ONCE AND AGAIN, DAVID KROLNER MAKES AN ERROR, WHICH SETS HIS BUSINESS BACK JUST A BIT. IT'S JUST A WAY OF KEEPING THINGS IN THEIR PROPER PROPORTION...FOR, IF DAVE'S DESTINY HAD BEEN LEFT IN HIS OWN HANDS, THIS YOUNG MAN MIGHT NOW BE RULING THE WORLD!

THE END

PREMIERE POSTSCRIPTS

ADDRESS MAIL TO PREMIERE POSTSCRIPTS CHARLTON COMICS GROUP, DERBY CONN. 06418

Dear Editor

Are you or are you not? That is the question What I'm asking is, are you going to continue Blue Beetle, Peace maker and some of your other action heroes I tried subscribing to them and received a letter back along with the money saying you weren't going to In reference to **CHARLTON PREMIERE** No 3 you did a fair job The art was very good in fact excellent But the story could have been better **Sinistro, Boy Fiend** just didn't make much sense at least at the start it didn't! I think you could have explained the character more That is why had he wanted to help crooks Not just because he was sick of seeing good guys win all of the time Had there been something when he was younger that brought him to this? Even so I did enjoy the story

Keep up the good work!

David Combs
312 South Mariposa Street
Burbank, Calif

Sorry, David...no plans at present to regularly publish any of our action-heroes. There may be occasional one-shots soon, though. Look for them.

Why can't you believe that someone (Sinistro) would want to help the bad guys simply because he's tired of seeing the good guys always winning! I believe it...I believe it!

Dear Editor

I would like to say that **CHARLTON PREMIERE** No 2 was the finest science fiction I've ever found in a comic mag Matter of fact, I feel sure that if it had been in prose it very conceivably could have been printed in a sf mag To tell the truth, comic sf usually leaves me cold as it is too juvenile, pointless and badly written This time, however, you've come out with a winner I would like to ask you please to have O'Shaugnessy and Boyette collaborate on another sf issue soon But now that you've come up with such a first, I shall be expecting you to keep it up Number 3 was not great, but the fact that the story did not fit into the stereotype plot that is usually used in the super-hero stories and that it had a taste of humor made it readable Honestly, if it implies what I hope it does, I would favor this "fantasy mag" over an issue of super-heroes next time Romance comics (????) you can dump They along with movie mags, confession mags and the horescope mags are the worst trash on the market Bring us more sf in the future please! But to put it bruntly, I'd rather have NO SF than BAD SF. I hope you'll take my views into consideration.

Ron Smith
644 S. Court St
Medina, Ohio

First, Ron, let me thank you for your kind comments on PREMIERE Nos. 2 and 3. Your views will most definitely be taken into consideration.

Now to a matter of some importance. You, like many comic readers, have a tendency to "put down" any type comic you don't personally like as "trash." That fact that you don't like romance comics doesn't make them trash. They're edited for girls...not you. The girls may very well feel that YOUR reading matter leaves something to be desired!

One last point. We've dropped our action-hero line, while our romance line continues to draw very favorable response at the newsstand.

Dear Editor

I wish to congratulate you on your CHARLTON PREMIERE No 3 I thought it stunk but, nevertheless, it appealed to me. I like the idea of a magazine so diverse that at least one issue has to appeal to someone. I am surprised that neither Marvel nor Brand Echh have thought of it before

Your second issue was, however, the finest comic I have ever seen in my life The story was superb The artwork was even better than Marvel's I especially liked the mixture of black and white and color Keep up the good work 'Nuff said!

Lane Randall
1257 Paces Forest Dr NW
Atlanta, Georgia

I didn't quite understand your opening paragraph the first time I read it but after I read it a second time I was thoroughly confused!

Now, lessee...you congratulated us for PREMIERE No. 3 because you thought it stunk but it appealed to you? Yeah, well...you're right..."nuff said!

Thanks for the other kind words...I think!?

Dear Editor

In Ted Seidler's letter in Premiere No 2 there are several points I disagree with entirely

He stated that Charlton has replaced Marvel as No 2. I believe that this statement is false. I see it as impossible for Charlton to replace Marvel as #2 for I (and thousands of other comic collectors and readers) regard Marvel as #1. I feel safe in saying that both your comics and Marvel's are superior in realism to National's

Mr Seidler may fire back with the fact that National sells more comics than Marvel. Granted. That is a true statement. However, National publishes more magazines than Marvel

Five or six years ago National was the undisputed king of comics, however it's crown has slipped It has degenerated to hero's gummed up by various colors of Kryptonite and dream stories and imaginary tales whose characters act and think mechanically

I am not questioning the truth or credability of Mr.Seidler's statements I believe his statements are his opinion as my statements are my opinion. I respect his opinion, however, the purpose of my letter was to present the story as I see it

Joe McCann
867 Hickory Lane
Saline, Michigan

And we respect your opinions...and the way you presented them.

Any additional comments?

POSTSCRIPTS FROM THE EDITOR

Next issue, "Race Unto Death"...a sort of whodunit...with a twist! Several twists, as a matter of fact! Don't miss it...hear?

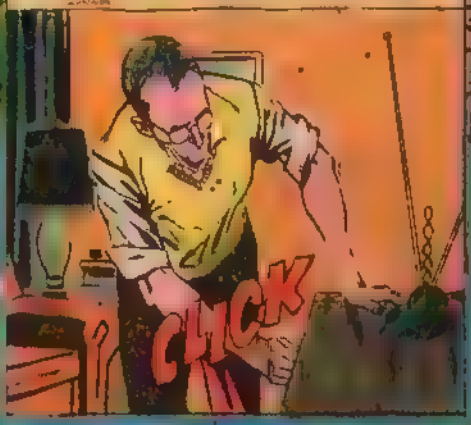
Good afternoon.

COME CLOSER! I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU! HERE IS A LITTLE TIDBIT FROM MY VAST COLLECTION OF *UNLIKELY TALES* I'M SURE YOU WILL ENJOY! MEET WILBERT BLAND...

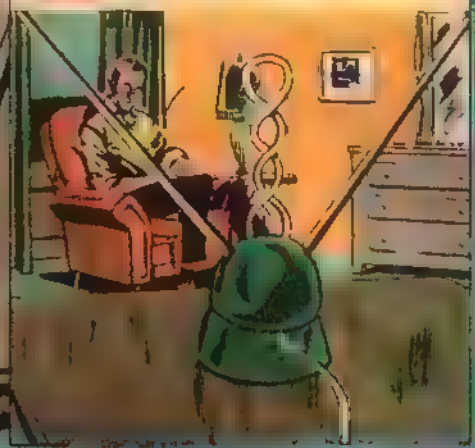
THE INSIGNIFICANT MAN

"THIS IS MY WORLD. THIS SMALL APARTMENT IN WHICH I LIVE. I SPEND ALL MY EVENINGS HERE, ALONE. SOMETIMES I WATCH TELEVISION. SOMETIMES, I READ. OR DO CROSSWORDS. I NEVER SEE ANYONE. NOT IN THE EVENING."

"I HAVE NO FRIENDS AND I DON'T WANT ANY. FRIENDS ARE A BURDEN. THEY MAKE DEMANDS. THEY TRY TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE. THEY GET YOU INVOLVED IN ALL SORTS OF SITUATIONS YOU DON'T WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN. I CAN DO WITHOUT FRIENDS. I'D RATHER BE BY MYSELF."



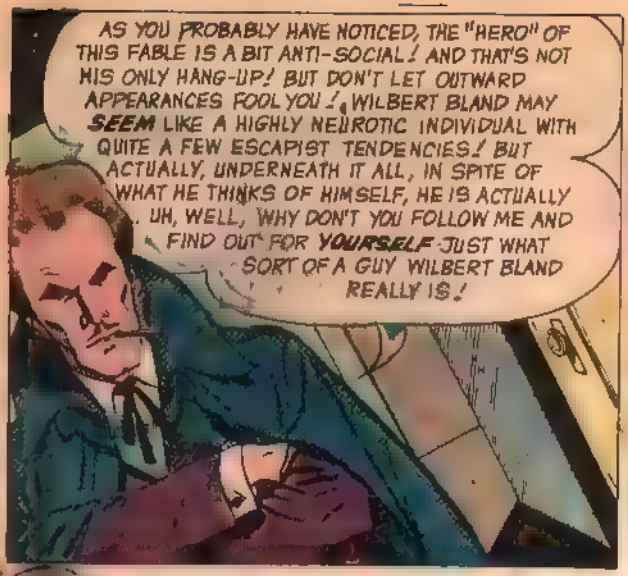
"MY LIFE HERE IS SIMPLE, PEACEFUL, UNCOMPLICATED. I HAVE NO WORRIES. NO COMMITMENTS. THE TROUBLES AND TENSIONS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD DON'T BOTHER ME HERE. WHY SHOULD THEY? THEY'RE NOT MY PROBLEM."

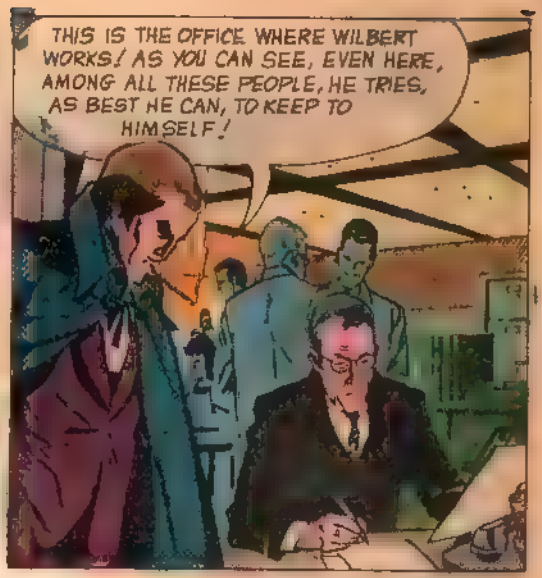


"I LIKE KEEPING TO MYSELF. APART FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD. UNINVOLVED. AND IF IT WERE POSSIBLE I'D PROBABLY NEVER LEAVE THIS PLACE. BUT UNFORTUNATELY, LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, I MUST EAT. SO EVERY WORKING DAY, FROM NINE TO FIVE, I HAVE TO FACE THAT STINKING WORLD OUTSIDE!"

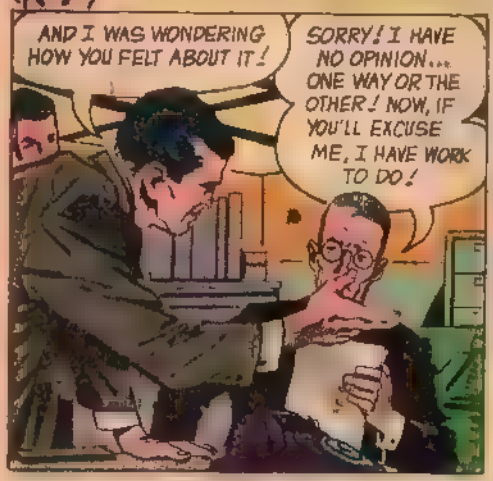
EDITED BY DICK GIORDANO • WRITTEN BY STEVE SKEATES • DRAWN BY JIM APARO

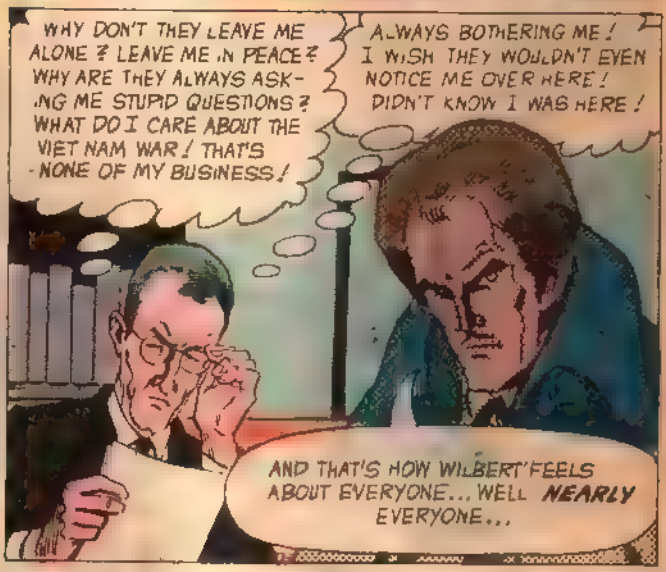
B-1227


AS YOU PROBABLY HAVE NOTICED, THE "HERO" OF THIS FABLE IS A BIT ANTI-SOCIAL! AND THAT'S NOT HIS ONLY HANG-UP! BUT DON'T LET OUTWARD APPEARANCES FOOL YOU! WILBERT BLAND MAY SEEM LIKE A HIGHLY NEUROTIC INDIVIDUAL WITH QUITE A FEW ESCAPIST TENDENCIES! BUT ACTUALLY, UNDERNEATH IT ALL, IN SPITE OF WHAT HE THINKS OF HIMSELF, HE IS ACTUALLY... UH, WELL, WHY DON'T YOU FOLLOW ME AND FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF JUST WHAT SORT OF A GUY WILBERT BLAND REALLY IS!


THIS IS THE OFFICE WHERE WILBERT WORKS! AS YOU CAN SEE, EVEN HERE, AMONG ALL THESE PEOPLE, HE TRIES, AS BEST HE CAN, TO KEEP TO HIMSELF!

BUT IT NEVER SEEMS TO WORK! THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE TRYING TO STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION!

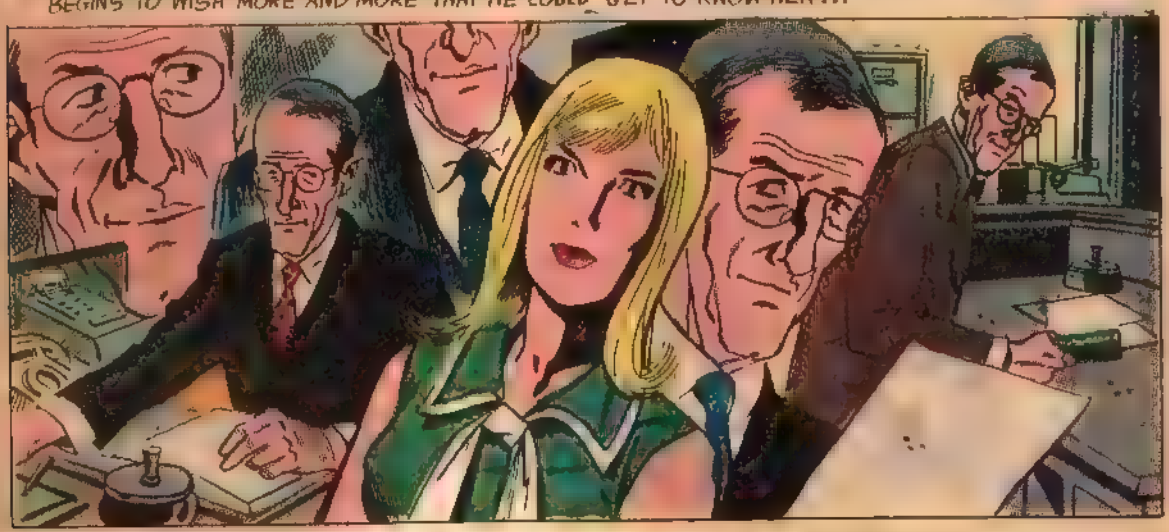

AND I WAS WONDERING HOW YOU FELT ABOUT IT!
SORRY! I HAVE NO OPINION... ONE WAY OR THE OTHER! NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE WORK TO DO!


WHY DON'T THEY LEAVE ME ALONE? LEAVE ME IN PEACE? WHY ARE THEY ALWAYS ASKING ME STUPID QUESTIONS? WHAT DO I CARE ABOUT THE VIET NAM WAR! THAT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS!
ALWAYS BOTHERING ME! I WISH THEY WOULDN'T EVEN NOTICE ME OVER HERE! DIDN'T KNOW I WAS HERE!
AND THAT'S HOW WILBERT FEELS ABOUT EVERYONE... WELL NEARLY EVERYONE...

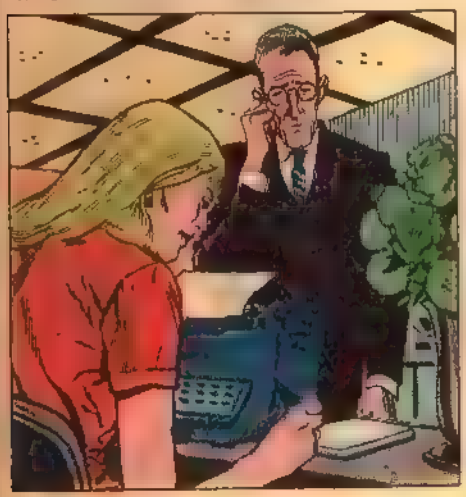
SANDERSON'S NEW SECRETARY SURE IS A LOOKER! AND SHE SEEMS LIKE A NICE PERSON, TOO!
NOW, THERE'S SOMEONE I'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW!

HEY! WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? WHAT AM I THINKING ABOUT? I DON'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED WITH ANYONE... NOT EVEN A PRETTY GIRL! THAT WOULD RUIN EVERYTHING!

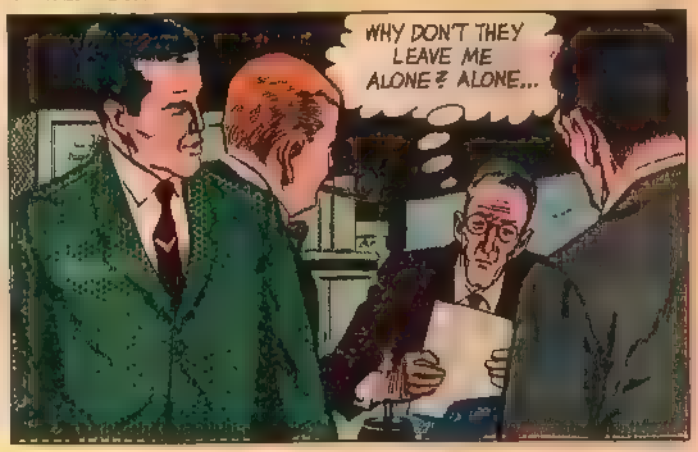
BUT AS THE DAYS PASS, WILBERT SEES THE GIRL AGAIN AND AGAIN... AND, IN SPITE OF HIMSELF, HE BEGINS TO WISH MORE AND MORE THAT HE COULD GET TO KNOW HER...



A FEW TIMES, HE EVEN TRIES TO SPEAK TO HER, BUT HE CAN'T QUITE BRING HIMSELF TO DO IT...

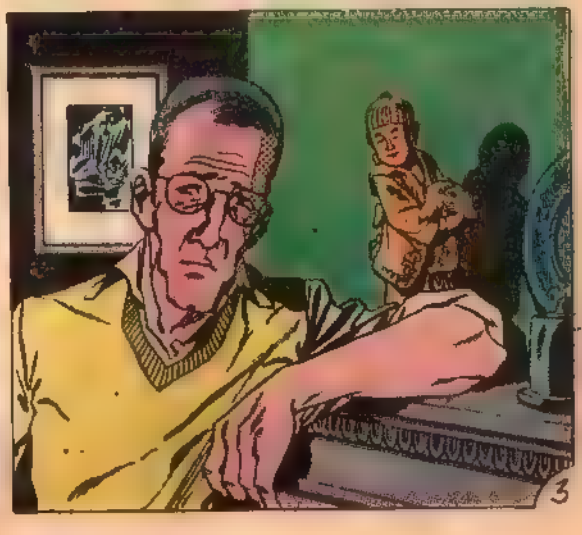


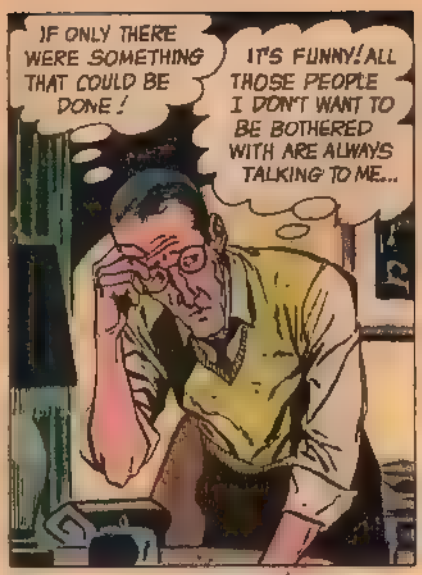
SECRETLY HE WOULD LIKE HER TO STOP AND TRY TO STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION WITH HIM, LIKE ALL THE OTHERS DO, BUT SHE DOESN'T./ SHE DOESN'T EVEN SEEM TO KNOW HE'S ALIVE. BUT THE OTHERS STILL COME, THE ONES HE ***DOESN'T*** WANT TO TALK TO...

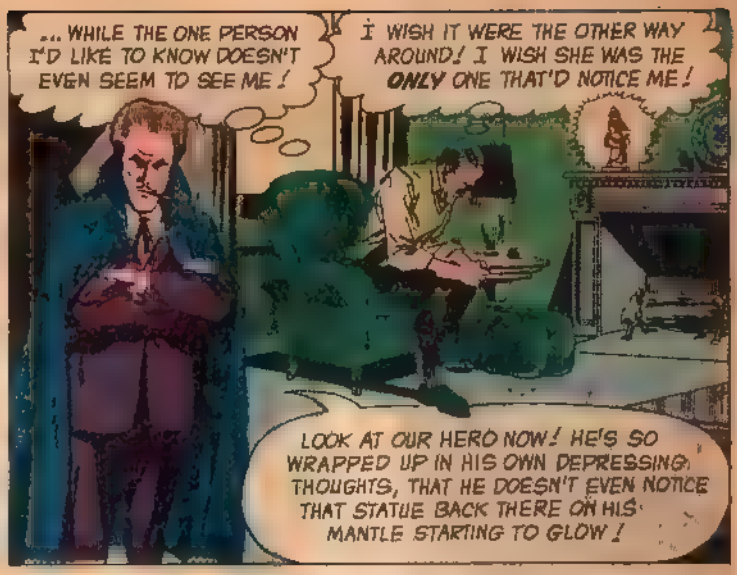


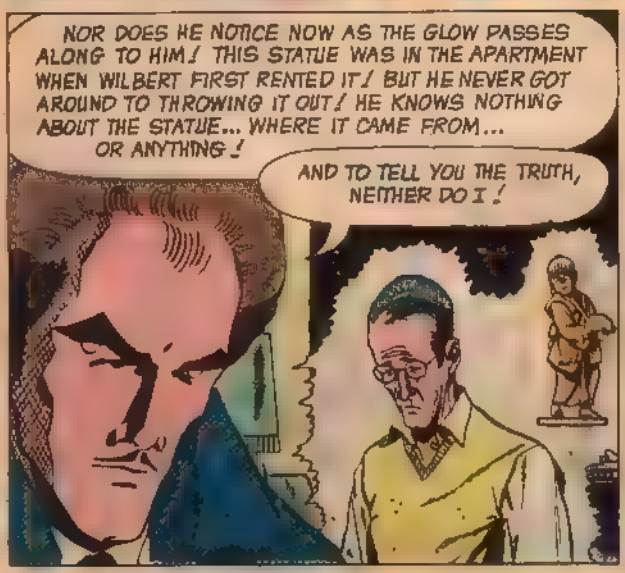
WILBERT'S HOME LIFE BEGINS TO CHANGE TOO. IT IS NO LONGER AS PEACEFUL, AS RELAXING, AS IT ONCE WAS...

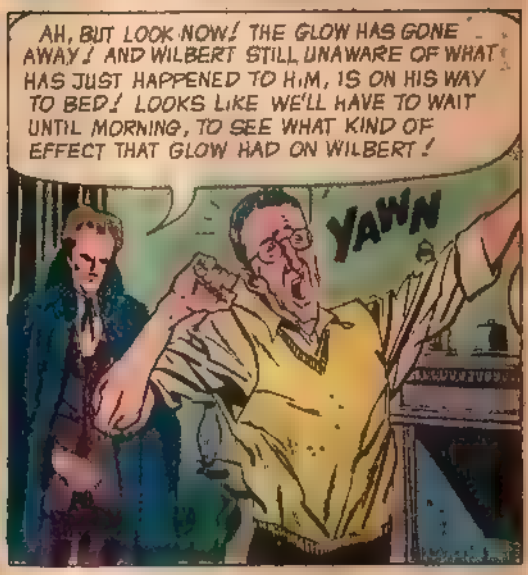
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, HE BEGINS SLOWLY TO REALIZE HOW ***LONELY*** HE REALLY IS...



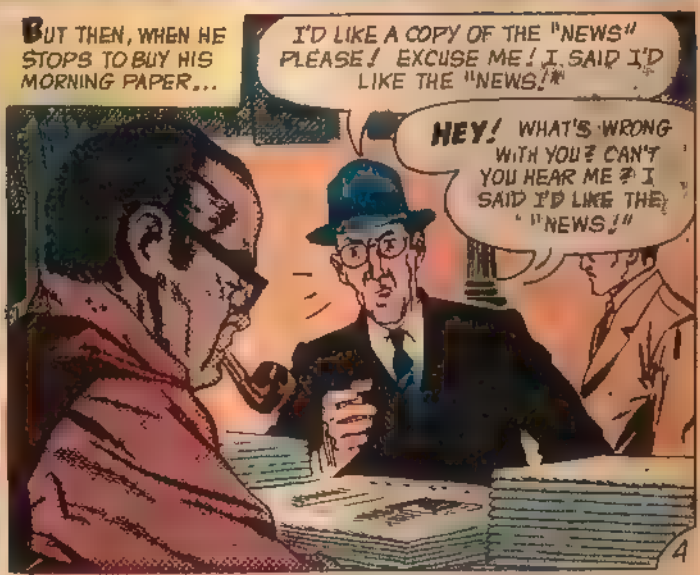

IF ONLY THERE WERE SOMETHING THAT COULD BE DONE!
IT'S FUNNY! ALL THOSE PEOPLE I DON'T WANT TO BE BOTHERED WITH ARE ALWAYS TALKING TO ME...

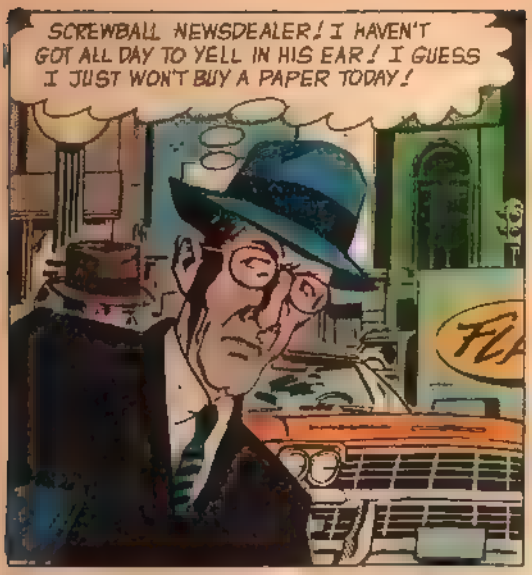

... WHILE THE ONE PERSON I'D LIKE TO KNOW DOESN'T EVEN SEEM TO SEE ME!
I WISH IT WERE THE OTHER WAY AROUND! I WISH SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT'D NOTICE ME!
LOOK AT OUR HERO NOW! HE'S SO WRAPPED UP IN HIS OWN DEPRESSING THOUGHTS, THAT HE DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE THAT STATUE BACK THERE ON HIS MANTLE STARTING TO GLOW!


NOR DOES HE NOTICE NOW AS THE GLOW PASSES ALONG TO HIM! THIS STATUE WAS IN THE APARTMENT WHEN WILBERT FIRST RENTED IT! BUT HE NEVER GOT AROUND TO THROWING IT OUT! HE KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT THE STATUE... WHERE IT CAME FROM... OR ANYTHING!
AND TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, NEITHER DO I!

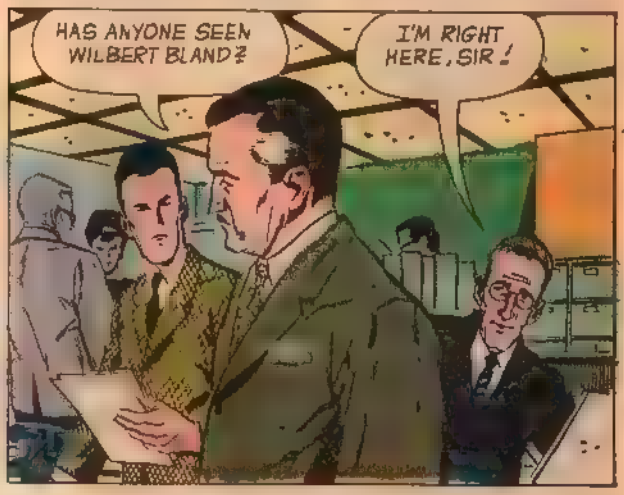

AH, BUT LOOK NOW! THE GLOW HAS GONE AWAY! AND WILBERT STILL UNAWARE OF WHAT HAS JUST HAPPENED TO HIM, IS ON HIS WAY TO BED! LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL MORNING, TO SEE WHAT KIND OF EFFECT THAT GLOW HAD ON WILBERT!
YAWN

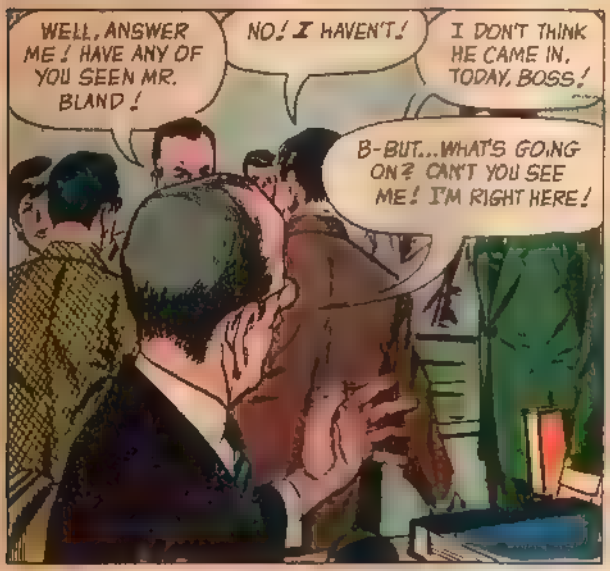
THE NEXT DAY, EVERYTHING SEEMS QUITE NORMAL! WILBERT RISES AT 7:30 AND BY 8:15 HE'S ON HIS WAY TO WORK...


BUT THEN, WHEN HE STOPS TO BUY HIS MORNING PAPER...
I'D LIKE A COPY OF THE "NEWS" PLEASE! EXCUSE ME! I SAID I'D LIKE THE "NEWS!"
HEY! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? CAN'T YOU HEAR ME? I SAID I'D LIKE THE "NEWS!"

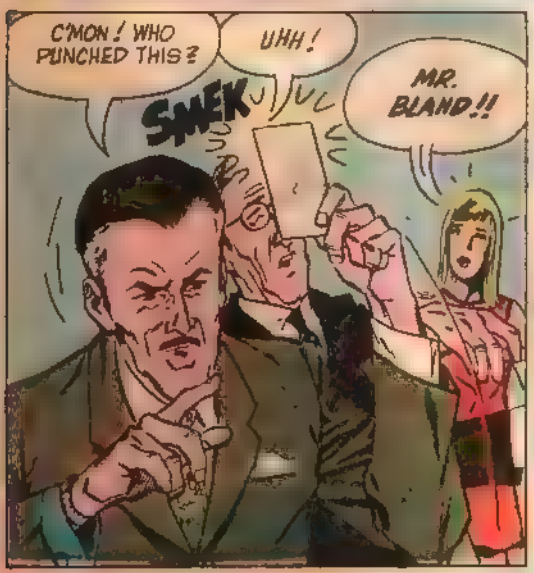


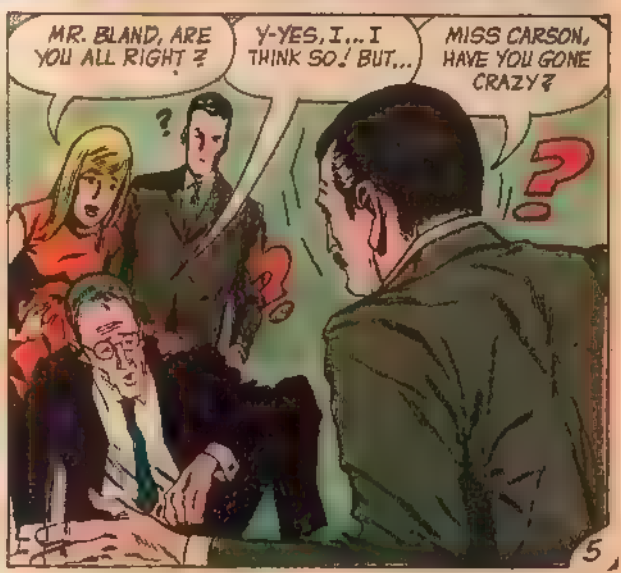
WILBERT, THEN, GOES TO THE OFFICE, PUNCHES IN, AND GETS TO WORK! AGAIN EVERYTHING SEEMS QUITE NORMAL... BUT THEN, SUDDENLY...



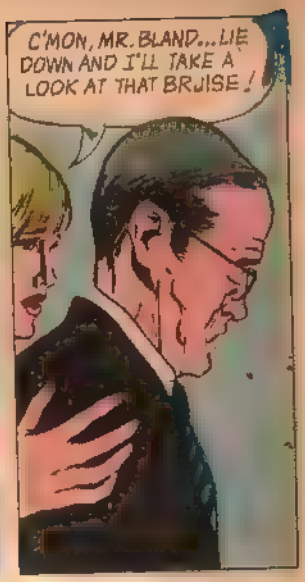

WELL, ANSWER ME! HAVE ANY OF YOU SEEN MR. BLAND!
NO! I HAVEN'T!
I DON'T THINK HE CAME IN, TODAY, BOSS!
B-BUT...WHAT'S GOING ON? CAN'T YOU SEE ME! I'M RIGHT HERE!

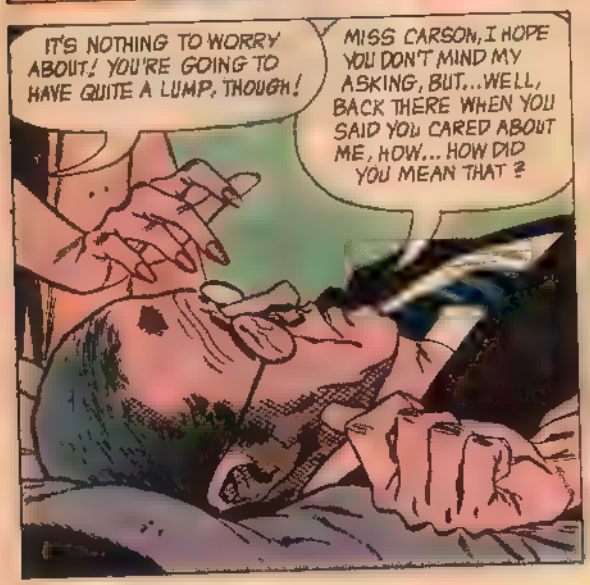
WELL, IF HE ISN'T HERE, THEN WHO PUNCHED HIS TIME CARD? IF THIS IS SOMEONE'S IDEA OF A JOKE, I'M TELLING YOU RIGHT NOW I DON'T THINK IT'S ONE BIT FUNNY!
B-BUT, SIR...





YOU SHOULD BE DOWN HERE, MAKING SURE MR. BLAND'S ALL RIGHT! NOT ME! YOU'RE THE ONE THAT HIT HIM!
WELL, MAYBE YOU DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO MR. BLAND! BUT I DO!
SLAP




IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT! YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE QUITE A LUMP, THOUGH!
MISS CARSON, I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING, BUT... WELL, BACK THERE WHEN YOU SAID YOU CARED ABOUT ME, HOW... HOW DID YOU MEAN THAT?

I... I DON'T KNOW! I USED TO THINK YOU WERE JUST A NOBODY! BUT, FOR SOME REASON, TODAY, I FELT STRANGELY ATTACHED TO YOU... ATTRACTED TO YOU...

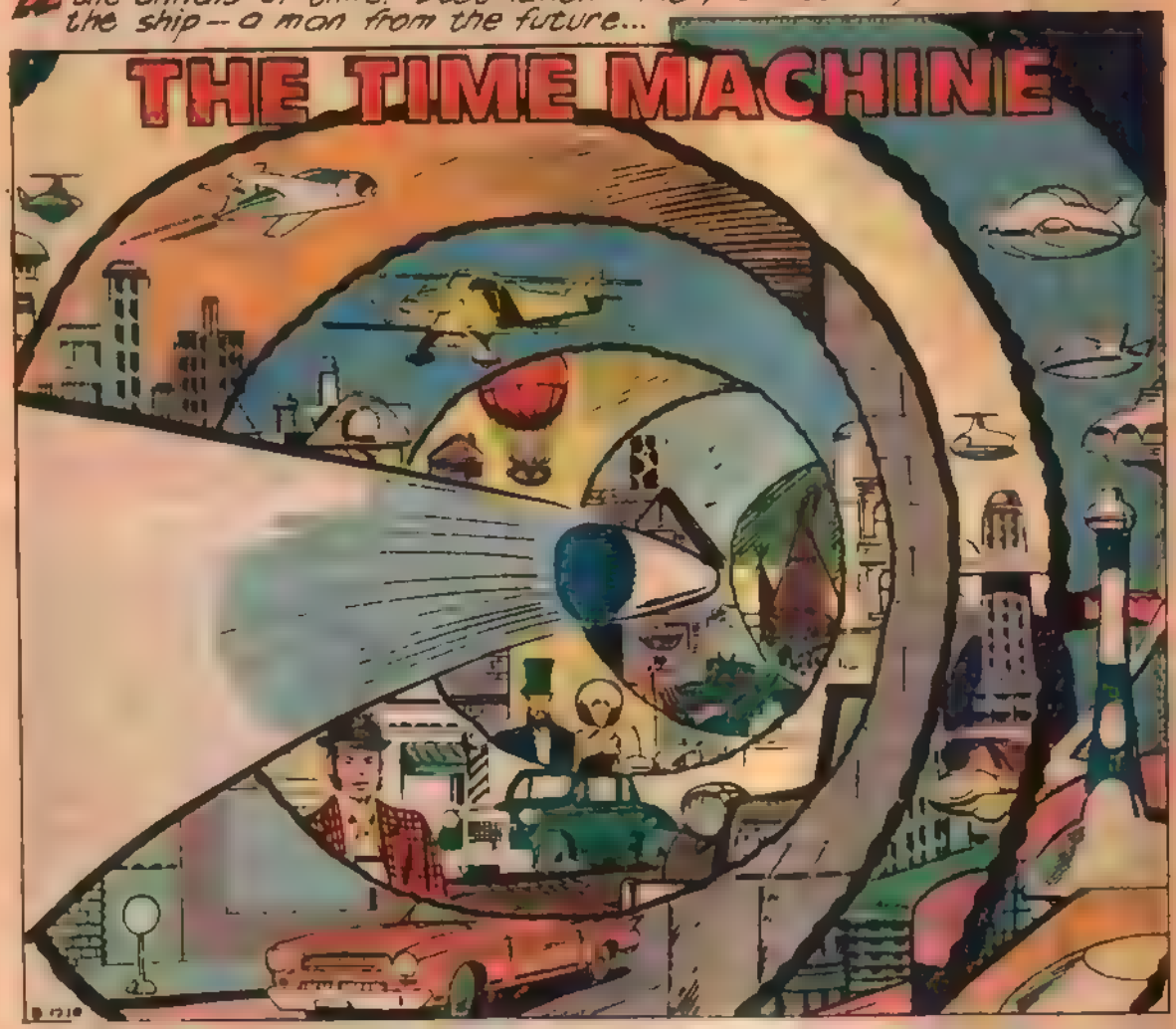
AND AS THEY CONTINUE TO TALK, NEITHER WILBERT NOR MISS CARSON NOTICE THE STRANGE WAY THE OTHER EMPLOYESS ARE STARING AT THEM...

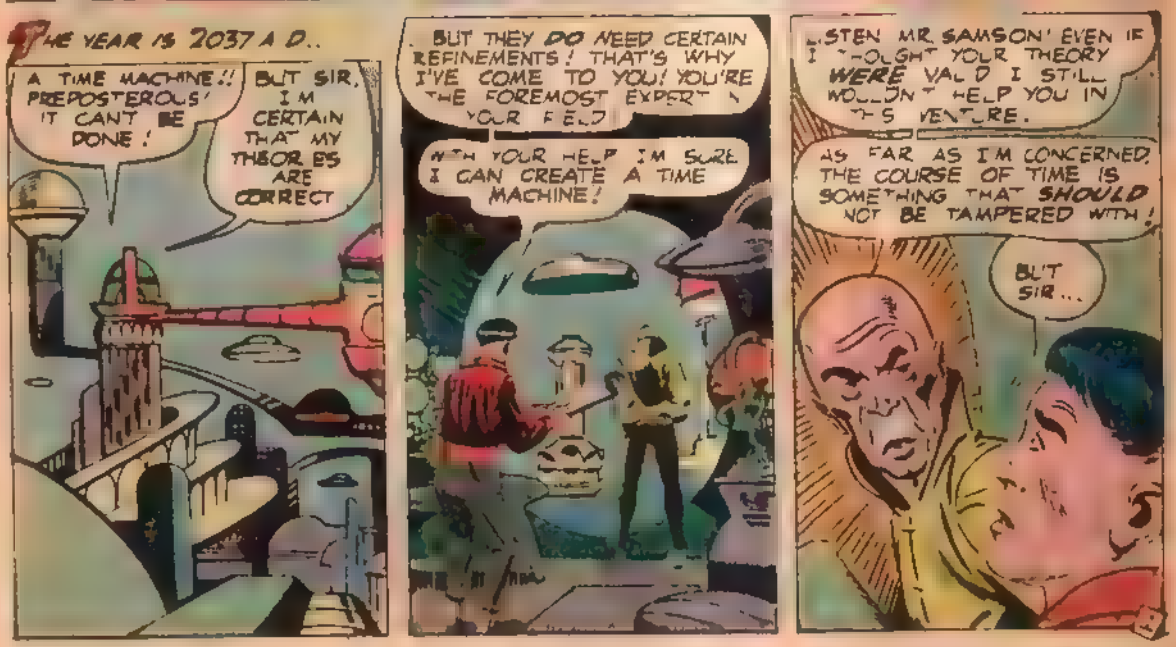
NOR DO THEY NOTICE THAT THEIR BOSS IS MAKING A HURRIED PHONE CALL...

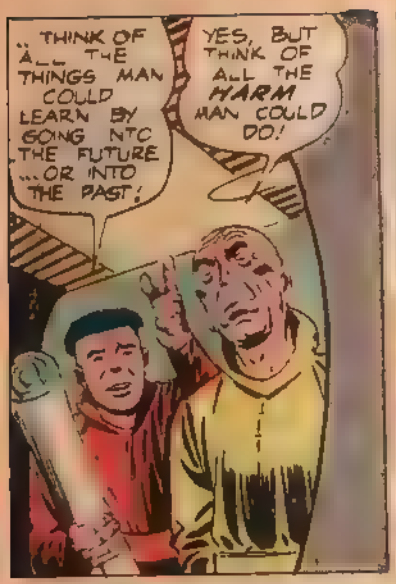
SHORTLY...
I THINK YOU CAN STAND UP NOW! HERE, I'LL HELP YOU!
THERE SHE IS! THE ONE OVER THERE BY THE COUCH!
SHE'S HAVING HALLUCINATIONS! KEEPS TALKING TO MR. BLAND... WHO DIDN'T COME IN TO WORK TODAY! AND SHE STRUCK ME! SHE'S OBVIOUSLY GONE INSANE! AND SHE'S VIOLENT!
BUT... MR. BLAND IS HERE! CAN'T YOU SEE HIM?
THAT'S ALL WE NEEDED TO HEAR, LADY! NOW, C'MON QUIETLY!
?
HEY! WAIT! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! I'M HERE! RIGHT HERE! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? WHY CAN'T YOU SEE ME??
SLAM
THEY... THEY COULDN'T SEE ME! AND THE BOSS AND THE OTHERS HERE! THEY COULDN'T SEE ME EITHER!
NOBODY CAN SEE ME, BUT HER!
BUT WHAT CAN I DO NOW? HOW CAN I CONVINCE ANYONE THAT SHE'S NOT INSANE!
I CAN'T! I'VE LOST HER!
WELL, WILBERT GOT HIS WISH! NOW NO ONE CAN NOTICE HIM, EXCEPT THE GIRL! BUT, SHE'LL SOON BE CURED OF HER "FANTASIES!" AS FOR WILBERT, HE'LL HAVE TO RETURN TO HIS FORMER EXISTENCE OF BEING ALONE... ONLY NOW HE'LL REALLY BE ALONE!
OH! BY THE WAY! IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE IN THE MARKET FOR STATUETTES, I'VE GOT A BEAUTY THAT I CAN LET GO, REAL CHEAP!
THE END

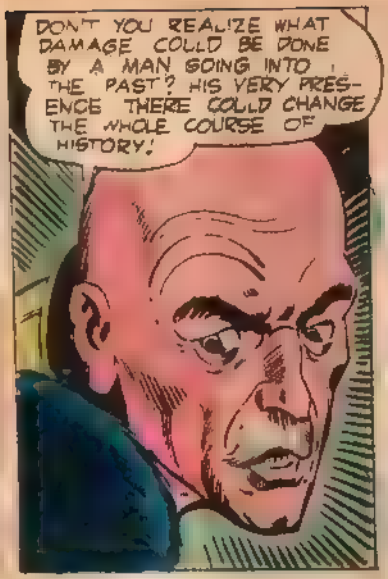
A ship...rather like a space ship in appearance whirling back through the annals of time! Destination: The prehistoric past And in the ship -- a man from the future...

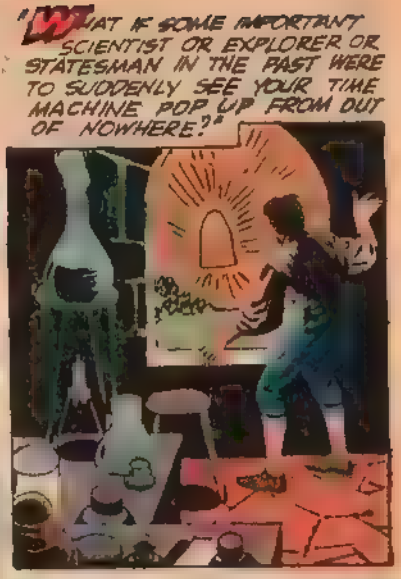
THE TIME MACHINE

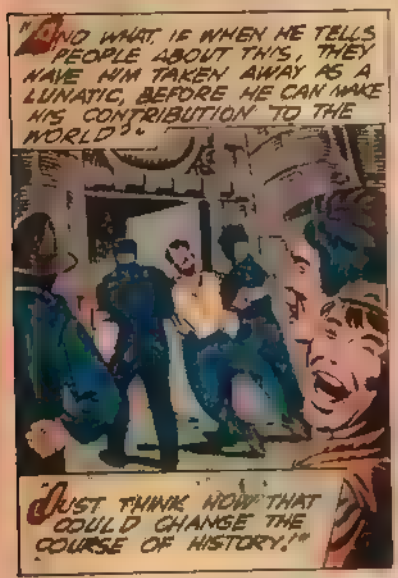



THE YEAR IS 2037 A.D..
A TIME MACHINE!! PREPOSTEROUS! IT CAN'T BE DONE!
BUT SIR, I'M CERTAIN THAT MY THEORIES ARE CORRECT
BUT THEY DO NEED CERTAIN REFINEMENTS! THAT'S WHY I'VE COME TO YOU! YOU'RE THE FOREMOST EXPERT IN YOUR FIELD
WITH YOUR HELP I'M SURE I CAN CREATE A TIME MACHINE!
LISTEN MR SAMSON! EVEN IF I THOUGHT YOUR THEORY WERE VALID I STILL WOULDN'T HELP YOU IN THIS VENTURE.
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED THE COURSE OF TIME IS SOMETHING THAT SHOULD NOT BE TAMPERED WITH!
BUT SIR...

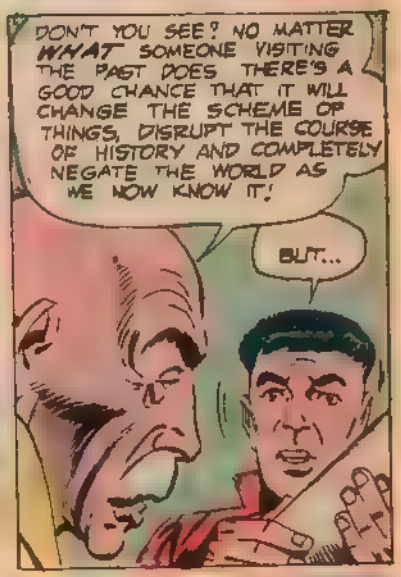

THINK OF ALL THE THINGS MAN COULD LEARN BY GOING INTO THE FUTURE ...OR INTO THE PAST!
YES, BUT THINK OF ALL THE HARM MAN COULD DO!

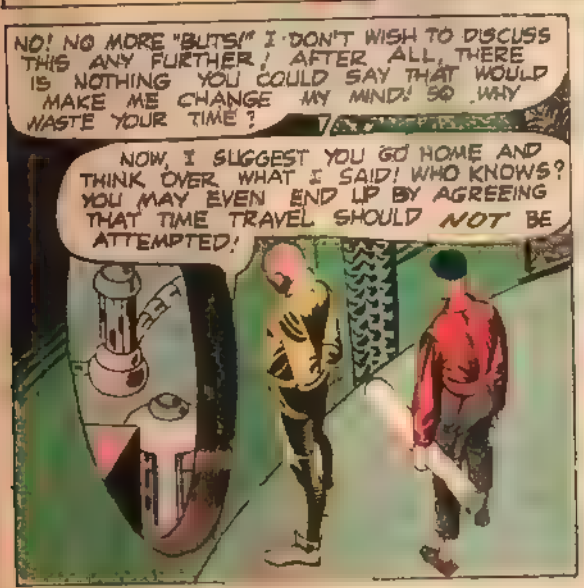

DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT DAMAGE COULD BE DONE BY A MAN GOING INTO THE PAST? HIS VERY PRESENCE THERE COULD CHANGE THE WHOLE COURSE OF HISTORY!

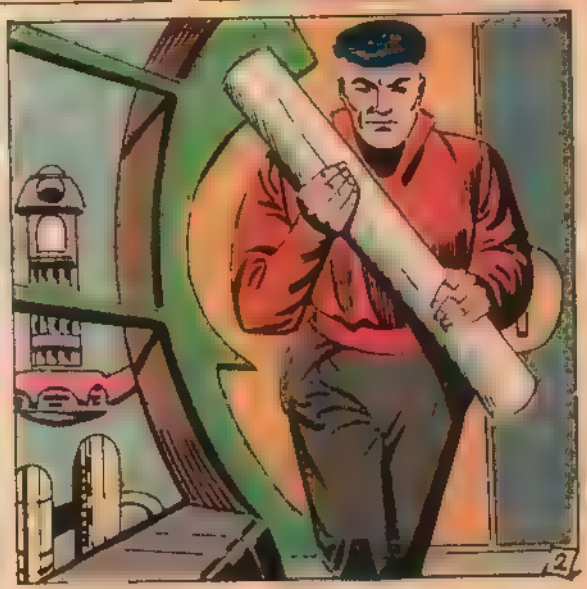

"WHAT IF SOME IMPORTANT SCIENTIST OR EXPLORER OR STATESMAN IN THE PAST WERE TO SUDDENLY SEE YOUR TIME MACHINE POP UP FROM OUT OF NOWHERE?"


"AND WHAT IF WHEN HE TELLS PEOPLE ABOUT THIS, THEY HAVE HIM TAKEN AWAY AS A LUNATIC, BEFORE HE CAN MAKE HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD?"
JUST THINK HOW THAT COULD CHANGE THE COURSE OF HISTORY!"

OR WHAT, IF WHILE YOU'RE EXPLORING THE PAST, YOU ACCIDENTALLY BRING ABOUT THE DEATH OF SOME FAMOUS PERSON?"
IT WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE TO BE SOMEONE FAMOUS--JUST SOMEONE OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE!"


DON'T YOU SEE? NO MATTER WHAT SOMEONE VISITING THE PAST DOES THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THAT IT WILL CHANGE THE SCHEME OF THINGS, DISRUPT THE COURSE OF HISTORY AND COMPLETELY NEGATE THE WORLD AS WE NOW KNOW IT!
BUT...


NO! NO MORE "BUTS!" I DON'T WISH TO DISCUSS THIS ANY FURTHER! AFTER ALL, THERE IS NOTHING YOU COULD SAY THAT WOULD MAKE ME CHANGE MY MIND! SO WHY WASTE YOUR TIME?
NOW, I SUGGEST YOU GO HOME AND THINK OVER WHAT I SAID! WHO KNOWS? YOU MAY EVEN END UP BY AGREEING THAT TIME TRAVEL SHOULD NOT BE ATTEMPTED!



HEADING HOME HE DOES THINK IT OVER... BUT THEN...
BAH! WHY SHOULD I LISTEN TO THAT OLD MAN? SO WHAT IF HE DOES THINK THE COURSE OF HISTORY CAN BE CHANGED?? THAT'S JUST HIS OPINION! HE HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING FOR SURE!
MAYBE HE'S COMPLETELY WRONG! MAYBE HISTORY IS ORDERED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT CANNOT POSSIBLY BE ALTERED. WHO CAN SAY ONE WAY OR THE OTHER?
BESIDES, IF I DON'T CREATE A TIME MACHINE, SOME DAY, SOMEONE ELSE WILL!
SO I'M GOING AHEAD-- WITH, OR WITHOUT THE OLD MAN'S HELP! I'M GOING TO BUILD THE MACHINE!
DAYS PASS... THEN MONTHS... THEN A YEAR! FINALLY...
THERE! I'VE DONE IT!
IT COMPLIES WITH ALL MY THEORIES! IT MUST WORK!
ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO TEST IT! AND NOW'S AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY!
5

THE PREHISTORIC AGES HAVE ALWAYS INTERESTED ME SO THAT'S WHERE I'LL HEAD!
MMMM

AH, HERE WE ARE--THE PREHISTORIC PAST! AS FOR OUR HERO, HE'S STILL OUT THERE IN THE ANNALS OF TIME, HEADING THIS WAY! HE'S DUE TO SHOW UP ANY MINUTE NOW! BUT BEFORE HE MAKES THE SCENE WHY DON'T WE FAMILIARIZE OURSELVES WITH THESE SURROUNDINGS?

FOR INSTANCE, LOOK AT THOSE NATIVE INHABITANTS OVER THERE! C'MON--LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!

WHEW! THEY SURE ARE AN UGLY, DUMB-LOOKING LOT, AREN'T THEY? BUT I WOULDN'T LAUGH AT 'EM IF I WERE YOU! AFTER ALL, THEY ARE YOUR ANCESTORS! WELL, AT LEAST, SOME OF 'EM ARE...

ACTUALLY, SOME OF THESE GUYS AREN'T GOING TO BE ANCESTORS OF ANYTHING--BECAUSE THEY ARE GOING TO DIE YOUNG, BEFORE THEY HAVE ANY FAMILIES OR CHILDREN OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT!

BUT YOU SEE THIS GUY HERE? HE'S GOING TO HAVE A FAMILY AND A LOT OF CHILDREN... AND HIS CHILDREN ARE GONNA HAVE CHILDREN... AND THEY'RE CHILDREN ARE GONNA HAVE CHILDREN...ETC., ETC., ETC.! AS A MATTER OF FACT, THIS FELLA IS DESTINED TO BE THE ANCESTOR OF MORE THAN HALF THE PEOPLE IN OUR PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY! HOW D'YUH LIKE THAT?

AH, SEE HOW HE'S SLOBBERING AND WIPING HIS LOWER LIP! THAT MEANS HE'S HUNGRY!

ANY MINUTE NOW, HE'LL PROBABLY START OUT--TO LOOK FOR FOOD!

AND THERE HE GOES--THE HUNGRY ANCESTOR!..

...CLIMBING A HILL--SO HE CAN LOOK DOWN ONTO THE PLAIN... AND SEE WHAT HE CAN SEE!

HEY! YUH WANNA MAKE A GUESS AS TO WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN NEXT?

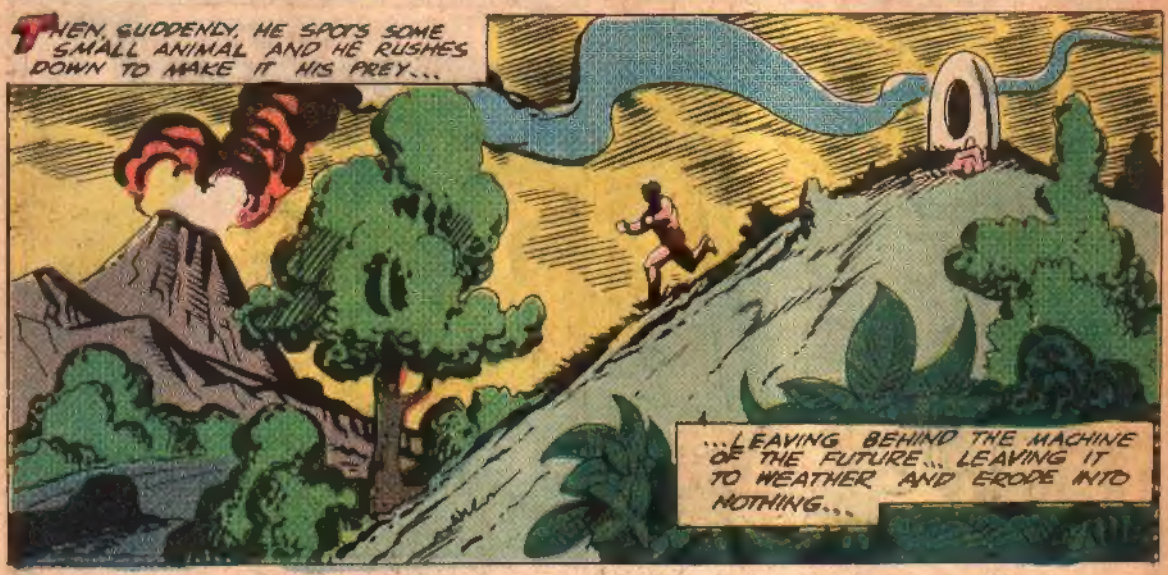
UPON A SMALL HILL STANDS A HUNGRY CAVEMAN, LOOKING PROBABLY FOR SOME SMALL ANIMAL TO MAKE HIS PREY...
SUDDENLY... A STRANGE CLOUD...
AND THE CAVEMAN TURNS IN TIME TO SEE A STRANGE OBJECT COME OUT OF THE SKY, HEADING HIS WAY...
BUT THERE IS NO TIME FOR THE CAVEMAN TO GET OUT OF THE OBJECT'S PATH...
KLOMP!
DEATH IS INSTANTANEOUS...
SO NOW... THIS CAVEMAN WHO WAS TO BE THE ANCESTOR OF MILLIONS, LIES DEAD... WHILE THE DOOR ON THE TIME MACHINE BEGINS TO OPEN...
... SLOWLY OPEN...

BUT IT IS NO TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SCIENTIST THAT STEPS FORTH...

IT IS, INSTEAD, A SAVAGE BEING, WHOSE BESTIAL BRAIN COMPREHENDS NONE OF WHAT HAS COME TO PASS...

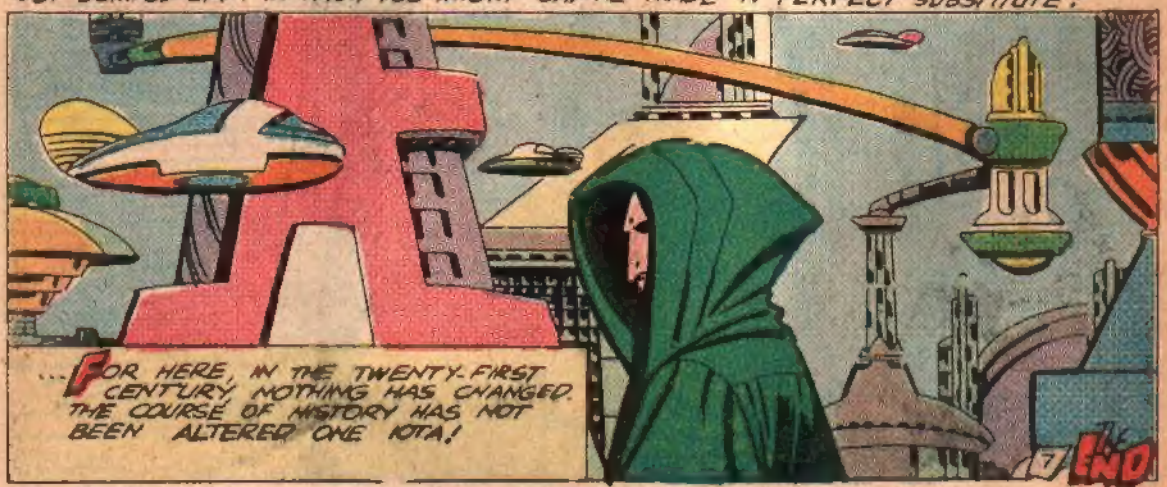
ALL THIS SAVAGE UNDERSTANDS IS THE HUNGER HE FEELS... AND THE FACT THAT FOOD IS NOT FAR AWAY...

THEN, SUDDENLY, HE SPOTS SOME SMALL ANIMAL AND HE RUSHES DOWN TO MAKE IT HIS PREY...



...LEAVING BEHIND THE MACHINE OF THE FUTURE... LEAVING IT TO WEATHER AND ERODE INTO NOTHING...

REVERSE EVOLUTION. PERHAPS THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR HERO! OR PERHAPS THERE'S SOME MORE MYSTICAL EXPLANATION! BUT, IN ANY EVENT, HE FIT RIGHT IN AMONG THE CAVEMEN, MADE A NICE SUBSTITUTE FOR THAT FELLA THAT GOT BUMPED OFF! IN FACT, YOU MIGHT SAY HE MADE A PERFECT SUBSTITUTE!



...FOR HERE, IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, NOTHING HAS CHANGED. THE COURSE OF HISTORY HAS NOT BEEN ALTERED ONE IOTA!

THE END

BUY CHARLTON COMICS!
(we need the money!)